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Meanwhile, how about some incremental measures to ease the burden that Americans are feeling? Let's face facts: There's no end in sight to the housing slump and the stock market has gone bare for the first time in years.

We're in a spiraling economy, and every dollar counts.

Campbell's plan, which will be presented in Washington later this week, would give a 30% return on money spent on an employee's commute to work. If passed, the bill would add a new line-item deduction on federal taxes, giving commuters a break.

It would be up to the IRS to determine how the deductions would be compiled, such as a log book or receipts.

Hmmm. More money in Americans' pockets? Less money for the federal government?

Sounds like a win-win.

Critics have called the plan insufficient, even gimmicky. Steve Young, the Democratic candidate challenging Campbell, called it "a Band-Aid for a heart attack."

“It is a Band-Aid,” Campbell responded. “But people are bleeding, and we need a Band-Aid until we heal the wound.”

We agree. Just because the proposed bill falls short of sweeping solutions — and make no mistake about it, we will need, at the end of the day, sweeping solutions to these unacceptable gas prices — doesn’t mean that it has no value. A 30% return is of great value to commuters who are paying more and more at the pump just to get to work.

We are bleeding — from the wallet — and anything that slows that down is helpful, even if it doesn’t make us whole.